

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 1364

EXDIS

E.OJM 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, NL

SUBJ: KLM CAPACITY

REF: THE HAGUE 1328

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS THE SECRETARY

SUMMARS. DURING MY MEETING WITH FONMIN VAN DER STOEL TODAY HE EXPRESSED WARM APPRECIATION FOR THE SECRETARY'S INITIATIVE IN ENDEAVORING TO REACH A FINAL SETTLEMENT OF THE KLM PROBLEM WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY ALTHOUGH COMPROMISE PROPOSAL DOES NOT YET GIVE THE DUTCH THE BASIS FOR SUCH A SOLUTION. INSTEAD, HE AND TRANSPORTATION MINISTER WESTERTERP, WHO NOTED SECRETARY'S PROPOSAL HAS CREATED CLIMATE FOR NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, PROPOSED A NEW ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH A SMALL NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES ON EACH SIDE, THE TIMING AND VENUE TO BE ARRANGED AT OUR MUTUAL CONVENIENCE. VAN DER STOEL ALSO SAID THAT HE WOULD BE SENDING HIS FORMAL REPLY VIA THE NETHERLANDS EMBASSY LATER TODAY, AT THE SAME TIME GIVING US AN INFORMATION COPY. END SUMMARY.

1. AS AGREED, FONMIN VAN DER STOEL RECEIVED ME AT 2:30 PM MARCH 14 WITH TRANSPORTATION MINISTER WESTERTERP AND FONOFF STATE SECRETARY BRINKHORST ALSO PRESENT. VAN DER STOEL BEGAN BY SAYING FRANKLY THAT HE HAD BEEN
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SHOCKED BY CAB ACTION PROPOSING UNILATERAL CURTAILMENT

OF KLM'S FREQUENCIES. HE HAD ALSO BEEN SHOCKED BY

DRASTIC NATURE OF PROPOSED CUTS WHICH, IF CARRIED OUT, WOULD HAVE VERY SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES FOR NETHERLANDS-US RELATIONS. WITH THAT OFF HIS CHEST, VAN DER STOEL EXPRESSED WARM APPRECIATION FOR THE SECRETARY'S INITIATIVE AIMED AT SETTLING THIS PROBLEM ONCE AND FOR ALL. HE WAS PARTICULARLY GRATIFIED THAT SECRETARY HAD STUCK TO HIS PROMISE NOT TO ALLOW ANY UNILATERAL ACTION WHILE ISSUE WAS STILL UNDER DISCUSSION BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS.

2. AS TO SUBSTANCE OF SECRETARY'S COMPROMISE PROPOSAL, VAN DER STOEL SAID THAT UNFORTUNATELY IT WAS NOT RPT NOT ONE WHICH GON COULD CONSIDER AS A BASIS FOR A FINAL SETTLEMENT. GON WAS, HOWEVER, ALWAYS PREPARED TO HAVE A NEW ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS.

3. I REPLIED THAT I WAS SORRY THAT GON COULD NOT ACCEPT SECRETARY'S PROPOSAL WHICH HAD BEEN OFFERED NOT RPT NOT IN THE GUISE OF A NEW NEGOTIATING STANCE BUT RATHER AS AN EFFORT WHICH HAD THE SECRETARY'S PERSONAL APPROVAL AND SUPPORT TO GET THIS ISSUE BEHIND US.

4. WESTERTERP INTERJECTED AT THIS POINT THAT HE FELT IT NECESSARY TO CLARIFY POSITION WHICH HE HAD ADVISED AT THE END OF THE LAST ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS IN THE HAGUE. HE HAD OFFERED, AS MANDATED BY THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, TO REDUCE KLM'S FREQUENCIES TO 23 A WEEK. WHEN THE US SIDE INDICATED THAT THIS WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE, WESTERTERP ON A STRICTLY PERSONAL BASIS HAD ADVISED HEAD OF US DELEGATION INFORMALLY THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO GO TO 21 OR 22 AS A FINAL DUTCH OFFER, WHICH IF ACCEPTED BY THE AMERICAN SIDE WESTERTERP WOULD THEN HAVE TO CLEAR WITH THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. IN THE EVENT, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY WALDMANN, AFTER CHECKING WITH US DELEGATION, HAD INDICATED TO WESTERTERP THAT US SIDE COULD NOT ACCEPT 21. THEREFORE, WESTERTERP CONCLUDED, FINAL OFFICIAL POSITION OF GON AT THE END OF THE LAST ROUND WAS 23 FLIGHTS A WEEK AND NOT 21 OR 22.

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5. ON SUBSTANCE OF SECRETARY'S PROPOSAL, WESTERTERP SAID HE COULD ACCEPT ONE-YEAR CONCEPT. HE WAS NON-COMMITTAL ON 540,000 SEAT LIMITATION AND I AM NOT SURE HE HAD REALLY FOCUSSED ON IT. HE MADE IT QUITE CLEAR THAT REAL STICKING POINT WAS REDUCTION TO 78 FLIGHTS A WEEK.

6. VAN DER STOEL SAID THAT HIS CONCLUSION WAS THAT WE SHOULD

START A NEW ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS AIMED AT A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME. FOR EMPHASIS HE NOTED THAT THERE WERE SO MANY MATTERS ON WHICH THE NETHERLANDS AND THE US CAN AND DO COOPERATE, SO WHY SHOULD WE NOT BE ABLE TO REACH AN AGREEMENT ON CIVIL AVIATION. I REPLIED BY POINTING OUT SOME OF THE PROBLEMS INHERENT IN HAVING A NEW ROUND AND SAID IT WAS PRECISELY FOR THIS REASON THAT THE SECRETARY HAD PROPOSED WHAT WE CONSIDERED A FAIR BASIS FOR A ONE-YEAR SETTLEMENT, OBVIATING ANY FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS. REENFORCING VAN DER STOEL'S VIEW, WESTERTERP SAID THE SECRETARY'S LETTER HAD CREATED THE CLIMATE FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WHICH HE FELT COULD BEST BE REACHED THROUGH FURTHER TALKS BETWEEN SMALL POLICY-LEVEL GROUPS OF US AND DUTCH REPRESENTATIVES. VAN DER STOEL AGREED AND ADDED THAT EITHER WESTERTERP OR HE WOULD BE AVAILABLE TO HEAD THE DUTCH SIDE. THEY WERE OPEN ON TIMING AND VENUE, BUT THEY SHARES OUR DESIRE TO REACH A FINAL SETTLEMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

7. VAN DER STOEL CONCLUDED BY REITERATING HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE SPIRIT OF THE SECRETARY'S LETTER AND THE GENUINE EFFORT IT REPRESENTED TO RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM ONCE AND FOR ALL. VAN DER STOEL WOULD TRY EXPECTED TO HAVE HIS WRITTEN REPLY READY FOR DISPATCH TO THE SECRETARY VIA THE NETHERLANDS EMBASSY BY COB TODAY (MARCH 14) AND SAID HE WOULD SIMULTANEOUSLY GIVE US AN INFORMATION COPY. WE WILL TRANSMIT LATTER AS SOON AS RECEIVED.
GOULD

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED

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